

dance with Rita Moreno—[laughter]—all my life. And it only lasted 30 seconds, but it was worth the trip.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 p.m. at the Rainbow Room. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gov. Betsy McCaughey Ross; New York City Public Advocate, Mark Green; Miguel Lausel, Marife Hernandez, and Dennis Rivera, event chairs; Judith Hope, State Democratic chair; and actress Rita Moreno.

Remarks on Departure From New York City and an Exchange With Reporters

December 10, 1997

Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change

The President. I'm sorry about the rain. I'll make this brief, but I want to take a moment before I leave to comment on the outcome of the climate change negotiations that have just been completed in Japan.

I am very pleased that the United States has reached a truly historic agreement with other nations of the world to take unprecedented steps to address the global problem of climate change. The agreement is environmentally strong and economically sound. It reflects a commitment by our generation to act in the interests of future generations.

The United States delegation, at the direction of the Vice President, and with the very, very skilled leadership of Under Secretary Stu Eizenstat, showed the way. The momentum generated by the Vice President's visit helped to move the negotiations, and I thank him very much.

I'm particularly pleased that the agreement strongly reflects the commitment of the United States to use the tools of the free market to tackle this problem.

There are still hard challenges ahead, especially in the area of involvement by the developing nations. It's essential that they participate in a meaningful way if we are to truly tackle this problem. But the joint implementation provisions of the agreement open the way to that result. The industrialized nations have come together and taken a strong step, and that is real progress.

Finally, I cannot say enough about the extraordinary leadership of Prime Minister Hashimoto. The people of Japan should be very proud of the spirit and the work that their country's leaders did to make this historic day possible.

Thank you very much.

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. No. No. And the agreement we made is actually, because of the way the details are worked out and what counts against the total, even though we have committed to a 7 percent reduction, it's actually closer to our original position than that indicates. We will make some reduction. I think we can.

We got what we wanted, which is joint implementation, emissions trading, a market-oriented approach. I wish it were a little stronger on developing nations participation. But we opened the way—the only way we can get there through joint implementation of projects in those countries.

This is a very good agreement. It is going to be possible for us to do this and grow our economy. It is environmentally sound. It's a huge first step. And I did not dream when we started that we could get this far. We should be very, very proud of this.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 p.m. at John F. Kennedy International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to the Kyoto Protocol to the Framework Convention on Climate Change reached at the Third Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which was held in Kyoto, Japan, December 1–10. The President also referred to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change

December 10, 1997

I am very pleased that the United States has reached an historic agreement with other nations of the world to take unprecedented action to address global warming. This agreement is environmentally strong and economically sound. It reflects a commitment by our